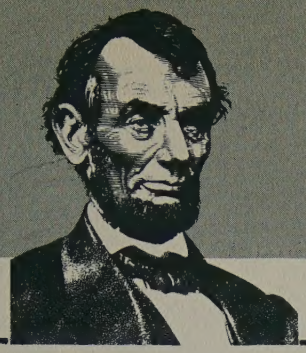


Lincoln Lore

Bulletin of The Lincoln National Life Foundation . . . Dr. R. Gerald McMurtry, Editor
Published each month by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Number 1461 FORT WAYNE, INDIANA November, 1959

". . . . THE LAST THURSDAY OF NOVEMBER"

Abraham Lincoln, president of the United States and Sarah Josepha Hale, editor of Godey's *Lady's Book* are generally recognized as the moving force in the establishment of an annual fixed date for the celebration of a national Thanksgiving Day. Lincoln as the chief executive issued the Thanksgiving proclamation and Mrs. Hale through the editorial page of her magazine carried on a campaign for many years to establish the last Thursday in November as the proper date to celebrate the American holiday.

It was in 1863 that Mrs. Hale was able to get national recognition of a fixed date for Thanksgiving Day. She wrote President Lincoln on September 28, 1863 requesting that he establish by proclamation "a national and fixed Union Festival." Lincoln complied five days later on October 3, 1863 with a Proclamation For Thanksgiving setting apart "the last Thursday of November next as a day of Thanksgiving. . . ."

Mrs. Hale later commented in the pages of her *Lady's Book* that the day "was joyfully observed in our own land, wherever the American flag held sway, and in the Old World wherever the knowledge of this fixed day, the last Thursday in November was known to American residents as the American Festival."

The celebration of the annual holiday, with a fixed date, was off to a good start in 1863 but a year later there was no indication that the president would set apart by proclamation the last Thursday in November in 1864 as a day for Thanksgiving. The year 1864, in fact, had provided little in a military or political way for Lincoln to be thankful for.

Mrs. Hale, however, was watching events closely. She apparently waited until after the October date Lincoln issued the 1863 proclamation to give him the opportunity of independent action in 1864. However, no Thanksgiving Proclamation was forthcoming. Meanwhile, Mrs. Hale prepared her editorial page of the *Lady's Book*. Her theme was "Our National Thanksgiving—A Domestic Festival."

Having to meet a dead-line, and realizing that her editorial would have little significance if Lincoln did not issue a Thanksgiving proclamation, she wrote William H. Seward, the Secretary of State. Her letter indicated some apprehension over Lincoln's failure to proclaim Thanksgiving by proclamation.

In her letter, written from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and dated October 9, 1864 she expressed the hope that Secretary Seward would bring the matter to the attention of the president:

"Enclosed is an article (or proof) on the National Thanksgiving. As you were, last year kindly interested in this subject. I venture to request your good, offiices again—

"My article will appear in the *November* number of the 'Lady's Book;' but before its publication I trust that President Lincoln will have issued his *Proclamation appointing the last Thursday in November as the Day.*

"I send a copy of the *proof* for the President. You will greatly oblige me by handing this to him and *acquainting* him with the contents of this letter. I do not like to trouble him with a note. Should the president see fit to issue his Proclamation at once the important paper would have time to reach the knowledge of American citizens in Europe and Asia, as well as throughout our wide land. If the President should recommend that all American ministers and consuls etc. should observe the Day in their respective offices in Foreign countries would it not have a good affect on our citizens abroad and if on land and sea, wherever the American Flag floats over our American citizen all should be invited and united in this National Thanksgiving would it not be a glorious Festival?"

The editorial entitled, "Editors' Table" and with a subtitle "Our National Thanksgiving—A Domestic Festival (Held Yearly On The Last Thursday In November)" follows:

"On the twenty-fourth of this month recurs the Day—'the last Thursday in November'—which has now become firmly established as one of three National Festivals of America.

" 'The Birth of Washington,' which brings before all minds the example of the patriot hero and the Christian man; 'Independence Day,' which reminds us of the free principles on which our Government was founded; and 'Thanksgiving Day,' which lifts our hearts to Heaven in grateful devotion, and knits them together in bonds of social affection—are three anniversaries such as no other People have the good fortune to enjoy. We fervently trust that, so long as the nation endures, these three

FROM WASHINGTON.

Proclamation by President Lincoln.

A Day of Thanksgiving Appointed for the Last Thursday in November.

WASHINGTON, October 21.

The following proclamation was promulgated this afternoon:—

By the President of the United States of America:

A PROCLAMATION.

It has pleased Almighty God to prolong our national life another year, defending us with His guardian care against unfriendly designs from abroad, and vouchsafing to us in His mercy many and signal victories over the enemy who is of our own household. It has also pleased our Heavenly Father to favor as well our citizens in their homes as our soldiers in their camps and our sailors on the rivers and seas with unusual health. He has largely augmented our free population by emancipation and by immigration, while He has opened to us new sources of wealth, and has crowned the labor of our working men in every department of industry with abundant reward. Moreover he has been pleased to animate and inspire our minds and hearts with fortitude, courage and resolution sufficient for the great trial of civil war, into which we have been brought by our adherence, as a nation, to the cause of freedom and humanity, and to afford to us reasonable hopes of an ultimate and happy deliverance from all our dangers and afflictions.

Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do hereby appoint and set apart the last Thursday in November next as a day which I desire to to be observed by all my fellow citizens wherever they may then be, as a day of thanksgiving and prayer to Almighty God, the beneficent Creator and Ruler of the universe, and I do further recommend to my fellow-citizens aforesaid, that on that occasion they do reverently humble themselves in the dust, and from thence offer up penitent and fervent prayers and supplications to the Great Disposer of events for a return of the inestimable blessings of peace, union, and harmony throughout the land which it has pleased Him to assign as a dwelling-place for ourselves and our posterity throughout all generations.

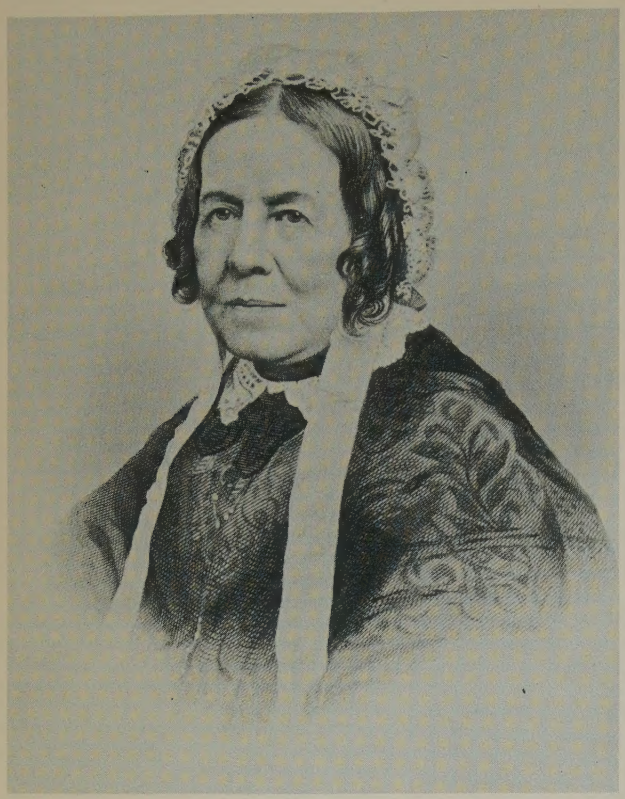
In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this 20th day of October, in the year of Our Lord 1864, and of the independence of the United States the eighty-ninth.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

By the President,
WM. H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.

Weekly Journal of Commerce
New York, New York, October 27, 1864



From the Lincoln Memorial University collection

Sarah Josepha Hale
Editor, Godey's LADY BOOK

Festivals will continue to be observed with an ever deepening sense of their beauty and value.

"In our endeavors, which have been continued for many years, to secure the recognition of *one day throughout the land as the Day of public Thanksgiving*, we are conscious of not having in any manner gone beyond the proper limits of the sphere which we have prescribed for the Lady's Book. It is the peculiar happiness of Thanksgiving Day that nothing political mingles in its observance. It is in its very nature a religious and domestic holiday. It belongs to the altar and the hearth, at which *women* should ever be present; and the women of our country should take this day under their peculiar charge, and sanctify it to acts of piety, charity, and domestic love.

"There is one duty connected with the *day* which on the present occasion should be especially called to mind. In the divine order which was given to the Israelites for the celebration of their great National Festival, the 'Feast of Weeks,' they were bidden to 'eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and *send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared.*' Although Providence has blessed our land with an abounding harvest, we must remember that there are among us many who will have but a scanty and insufficient share in this abundance. The civil war has given to our care many maimed and helpless men, many widows and orphans, many destitute refugees. Notwithstanding all the provision made by Government, there will be ample room for all that private benevolence can bestow. Let us each see to it that on *this one day* there shall be no family or individual, within the compass of our means to help, who shall not have some portion prepared, and some reason to join in the general Thanksgiving.

"Who can estimate the benefits and blessings which may flow from the faithful observance of this happy Festival? For one day the strife of parties will be hushed, the cares of business will be put aside, and all hearts will join in common emotions of gratitude and good-will. We may even hope that for one day war itself will cease by common consent, as was the custom in the Middle Ages during the solemn church Festival known as the 'Truce of God:' and it is not impossible that sentiments may then be awakened which will aid in bringing on that return of true union and peace which is so earnestly desired.

"At all events, we may be sure that, wherever it is possible, among our war-worn soldiers in every camp and hospital, among our gallant sailors on every sea, among our devoted missionaries, laboring throughout all heathendom among patriotic Americans in every foreign country, as well as among millions of homes in our own wide land, between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, this great National and Domestic Festival will be celebrated with happy recollections and cheerful hopes, and with grateful and softened hearts.

"Let us all, with devout thankfulness to the beneficent Giver of all good gifts, do our best to make this coming Thanksgiving Day a foretaste of that happy period of 'peace on earth and good-will among men,' in which all wrongs and sufferings from evil are to dissolve like shadows before the noonday sun, in the righteousness and goodness which will crown the glorious reign of Christ on earth."

Seward evidently brought to Lincoln's attention the letter and editorial which Mrs. Hale had sent to him. However, Lincoln waited until October 20, 1864, when the political and military fortunes of the nation had taken on a more optimistic aspect, to issue his second annual Thanksgiving Day proclamation. The 1864 proclamation, like that of 1863, set apart the "last Thursday in November" as the day on which the celebration was to be held.

The real significance of Lincoln's 1864 proclamation, although later presidents broke precedent by using other dates, was that Thanksgiving Day, to be celebrated on "the last Thursday in November," was now an established and fixed date.

In addition to the day's national appeal it also had a real religious significance. The editor of *Lincoln Lore*, No. 1180, November 19, 1951 made the following comment: "Two seasons of equal religious significance find their place in the Church Calendar, Lent preceding Easter and Advent, preceding Christmas, both periods emphasing fasting and prayer. As early as the Sixth Century the first Sunday in Advent was established by its designation as the first Sunday following the 'last Thursday in November.' Inasmuch as the Friday and Saturday preceding this Sunday become days of fast and penance, the preceding Thursday was the last day available for feasting. Hence the feasting idea was associated with the *last* Thursday in November."

From 1863 to 1939 the fixed date, with minor exceptions, prevailed for the national festival. In 1939 Thanksgiving Day was moved to the third Thursday in November which has no national or religious significance. This changing of the fixed date led to a great deal of confusion with some states adhering to the traditional date.

In 1941 Congressman Michener of Michigan introduced a joint-resolution to restore "the last Thursday in November as the annual Thanksgiving Day." The resolution passed the House. The Senate then amended the resolution by striking out the word "last" and substituting the word "fourth."

Fortunately for those who cherish tradition, the majority of the "Fourth Thursdays" are the "last Thursdays" of November. The 1959 calendar indicates that Thanksgiving this year will be celebrated on November 26, the last Thursday of the month.

See *Lincoln Lores* Nos. 33, 294, 972, 1024, 1180 and 1233.

McMURTRY VISITS SOUTHEASTERN ASIA

Dr. R. Gerald McMurtry, the editor of *Lincoln Lore* and the Director of the Lincoln National Life Foundation left Fort Wayne, Indiana, on September 11, 1959 for a three months tour of Southeastern Asia. Dr. McMurtry was awarded a grant to visit the Far East under the Department of State's International Exchange Service. As an American Specialist he is giving a series of lectures on Abraham Lincoln and is discussing informally with the members of various clubs and cultural groups the democratic aspects of Lincoln's political philosophy. Upon being notified of the availability of Dr. McMurtry as an authority and lecturer on the Sixteenth President the following countries requested his services:

Korea Sept. 14-26	Indonesia Oct. 13-24
Taiwan Sept. 26-Oct. 4	Singapore Oct. 24-31
Hong Kong Oct. 5-12	Malaya Oct. 31-Nov. 7

Thailand Nov. 7-21

Enroute home Dr. McMurtry will spend several days in Manila, P.I. and Honolulu, Hawaii, lecturing on Lincoln. In both of these cities he will be sponsored by the Theo. H. Davies & Co., Ltd., agency representatives of The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company.

From the Meserve Collection

Detail of a greatly enlarged photograph of president Lincoln (hatless) seated in the center of the crowd on the platform at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, on November 19, 1863. The Photograph was taken by Mathew B. Brady. The negative was discovered by Miss Josephine Cobb in the National Archives in Washington, D.C.

THE DEDICATION OF THE GETTYSBURG CEMETERY

November 19, 1863

"—it is worth while to look at the **ensemble.** Perhaps upon no other American stage has there been such a conjunction of all that is distinguished by official position, statesmanship, learning and eloquence.

"The central figure is, of course, that of the orator, his head white with the snows of seventy winters, but his form as erect, his eye as bright, his complexion as clear, his voice as full and sweet, his gesture as graceful, and the expression of his face as genial as in his manhood's prime. It was evident that he labored under no ordinary emotions. Before him and in the distance were the ranges of hills where, less than five months ago, stood the invading foe; on either side were the fresh graves of the heroes who had fallen, and in his immediate presence the illustrious living, and the representatives of every free State of the Union. It was a scene to inspire lips less eloquent than his. Mr. Everett shows no signs of decay other than his whitening hairs and the deepening lines of his face. This oration, which he is now pronouncing, we know, is already in type; every word is faithfully memorized; there is no hesitation; the stream of eloquence flows steadly on; and there is the gesture, once observed, never to be forgotten, when the orator rises to some climax, and the arms outspread, and the fingers, quivering and fluttering, as once said, like the pinions of an eagle, seem to rain down upon the audience the emotions with which they vibrate; there is the stately pose of the well formed figure, gracefully displayed in the tightly buttoned and close fitting frock coat; and you can not help thinking all the while that to his many rich mental endowments, Mr. Everett adds the immense advantage of a perfect form and a face absolutely handsome.

"In strange contrast, is the figure seated immediately behind him. A Scotch type of countenance, you say, with the disadvantage of emaciation by a siege of Western auge. It is a thoughtful, kindly, care-worn face, impassive in repose, the eyes cast down, the lids thin and firmly set, the cheeks sunken, and the whole indicating weariness, and anything but good health. This is the President. Occasionally a smile passes over his face, as some forcible remark of the orator arouses him, and once he placed his hand quickly on the shoulder of the gentlemen at his left, and spoke an approving word. The person addressed has sat so far with his arms tightly folded, and his hat drawn down over his eyes, which seem to see nothing of all that is passing before him. This is Mr. Seward, as you know by the bushy, beetling eyebrow, the wiry face—now more wiry than ever. He has grown old fast. The hair and whiskers are almost white, and the face sharper and more Americanized than we have ever seen it.

"On the right of the President sits the Rev. Dr. Baugher, of the Gettysburg College, who is to pronounce the benediction—a semi-bald head, a hooked Roman nose, clear blue eye, and a decidedly clerical face. He would pass any where for a theological professor, a man of firm will, but kindly and affiable withal. Still to the right is the most unearthly face out of the grave; absolutely colorless; the lips as white as the wasted cheek, and the flowing hair, and tuft of whiskers under the chin, as snowy white as wool. This is the Rev. Dr. Stockton, whose eloquent and impressive prayer brought tears to the eyes of thousands but a moment ago. Further to the left of the President sits Governor Curtin—a princely figure with a manly face; next to him Governor Seymour of New York—a stout, hearty, well-to-do man—and next to him the good-humored, florid and plump Governor Tod, of Ohio. In their rear is the dark, brigandish unmistakable figure of Forney. There is another group in the rear of the President worth looking at. It comprises Vice President Hamlin; the Aldermanic Governor-elect of Ohio, Montgomery Blair, Lieutenant Governor Anderson, and standing near them, the most executive of Governors, Morton of Indiana. Interspersed with these are Governors of other States, members of Congress, iron-grey Simon Cameron, the brilliant dresses of officers of the army, of the navy, etc., the whole making up a singular and remarkable group of men, whose names are imperishably connected with the momentous events of the last three years."

Cincinnati Daily Commercial,
Monday, November 23, 1863.

ANALYSIS OF LINCOLN'S CHARACTER

"The following from the New York **Times** is appropriate to the subject on which it treats the character of Mr. Lincoln:

'An intense, all comprehensive patriotism, was a constant stimulus of all his public exertions. It grew into the very constitution of his soul, and operated, like a natural function, continuously, spontaneously and almost as it were unconsciously. It prevaded and unified all that he did. If he had ambition, it was to serve his country, and in that sphere where he might do it most effectually. In no way did he ever fail his country in the time of need. He was independent, self poised, steadfast. You always knew where to find him; you could calculate him like a planet. A public trust was to him a sacred thing. Sublimer moral courage, more resolute devotion to duty, cannot be found in the history of a man than he has displayed for the salvation of the American Union. It was the sublime performance of sublime duties that made him so trusted, and which has given him a fame as solid as justice, and as genuine as truth.' "

Galena Weekly Gazette
Galena, Illinois,
April 25, 1865

CUMULATIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY—1959

Selections approved by a Bibliography Committee consisting of the following members: Arnold Gates, 289 New Hyde Park Road, Garden City, N. Y.; Carl Haverlin, 2 Masterson Road, Bronxville, N. Y.; E. B. Long, 708 North Kenilworth Ave., Oak Park, Ill.; Richard F. Lufkin, 45 Milk Street, Boston, 9, Mass.; Wayne C. Temple, Lincoln Memorial University, Harrogate, Tenn.; Ralph G. Newman, 18 East Chestnut Street, Chicago 11, Ill.; William H. Townsend, 310 First National Bank Bldg., Lexington 3, Ky.; and Clyde C. Walton, Illinois State Historical Library, Springfield, Ill.

New items available for consideration may be sent to the above address or to the Lincoln National Life Foundation.

WINN, RALPH B. **1959-53**

A Concise/Lincoln Dictionary/Thoughts and Statements/Compiled and Arranged/by/Ralph B. Winn/(device)/Philosophical Library/New York.

Book, cloth, 4¾" x 7½", 152 pp., price $3.75.

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA **1959-54**

The Lincoln Trail/Hike/. . ./for qualified members/of the/Boy Scouts of America/Sponsored by/Abraham Lincoln Council/730 East Vine Street/Springfield, Illinois/Phone 8-5693/(Cover title).

Folder, paper, 4" x 9", (6) pp.

BROADCAST MUSIC, INC. **1959-55**

The Abraham Lincoln Story 1809-1959 is the current segment of the prize-winning radio series The American Story, which is distributed as a public service by Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI) to radio stations and to local boards of education, public libraries and educational institutions to be used in connection with broadcasting.

Folder, paper, 8½" x 11". Continuation of 1959-26. Scripts No. 21—40, 5—7 pages each.

COOPER UNION **1959-56**

Commemorating/The 99th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's address/at the Cooper Union/The 150th anniversary of Lincoln's birth/Coinciding with the issuance of a 3¢ Lincoln stamp/The founding of the Cooper Union in 1859/Lincoln speaking in the Great Hall of The Cooper Union February 27, 1860/(sketch showing Lincoln addressing audience)/(Cover title).

Folder, paper, 6¾" x 9", (4) pp., illus.

DOYLE, BERNICE McCLURE **1959-57**

Lincoln Land Times/Extra/Volume One, Number 1/Springfield, Illinois, May 4, 1865/Bernice McClure Doyle, Editor/25 cents per copy/Lincoln Comes Home/(Caption title).

Folder, paper, 12" x 16⅛", 4 pp. Souvenir in newspaper format not intended to be issued regularly.

FOX, G. GEORGE **1959-58**

Abraham Lincoln's/Religion/Source of the Great Emancipator's/Religious Inspiration/by/Dr. G. George Fox/(device)/An Exposition-Banner Book/Exposition Press New York.

Book, cloth, 5½" x 8¼", 119 pp., price $3.00.

HARKNESS, DAVID JAMES **1959-59**

Abraham Lincoln/and Cumberland Gap/David James Harkness/The University of Tennessee News Letter/Vol. XXXVIII April 1959 No. 2.

Pamphlet, flexible boards, 6" x 9", 31 pp., price $1.00.

HARPER, ROBERT S. **1959-60**

1809-Abraham Lincoln-1865/The Critter in Marble/(Photo of T. D. Jones, sculptor)/A Publication of the Ohio Lincoln Sesquicentennial Committee/Ohio State Museum—Columbus 10, Ohio/Nineteen Hundred Fifty-Nine.

Pamphlet, paper, 5½" x 8½", (8) pp.

HARRISON AND SONS, LIMITED **1959-61**

Ghana/(Sketch of Lincoln)/Special issue of Ghana Postage Stamps commemorating/the 150th Birthday Anniversary/of Abraham Lincoln/Emission speciale de timbres-postes de Ghana destinee a honorer le 150eme Annniversaire/de la naissance d'Abraham Lincoln/(Cover title).

Folder, paper, 4" x 8½", (6) pp. Illustrated folder of Ghana stamp in English and French.

HENRY E. HUNTINGTON LIBRARY & ART GALLERY **1959-62**

Henry E. Huntington Library/and Art Gallery/An Exhibition/Commemorating/the birth of/Abraham Lincoln/February 12/1809/(Lincoln photo)/Abraham Lincoln/From the photograph by/Alexander Hesler, September 30/1959/(Cover title).

Folder, paper, 4" x 9", (8) pp., illus.

LINCOLN MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY **1959-63**

Lincoln Memorial University Press/Spring 1959/Vol. 61, No. 1/Lincoln Herald/A Magazine devoted to historical research in the field of Lincolniana and the Civil War, and to the promotion of Lincoln Ideals in American Education.

Pamphlet, flexible boards, 7⅛" x 10¼", 40 pp., illus.

McMURTRY, R. GERALD **1959-64**

The/Harlan-Lincoln Tradition/at Iowa Wesleyan College/by/Dr. R. Gerald McMurtry/Price 25 Cents/The Harlan-Lincoln Restoration Commission/1959.

Pamphlet, flexible boards, 6½" x 9½, 20 pp., fr., illus. Reprinted from Lincoln Herald, Oct. 1946.

OHIO LINCOLN SESQUICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE **1959-65**

1809-Abraham Lincoln-1865/A Lincoln Reading List/(Photo of Lincoln and son Tad)/A Publication of the Ohio Lincoln Sesquicentennial Committee/Ohio State Museum—Columbus 10, Ohio/Nineteen Hundred Fifty-Nine/(Cover title).

Pamphlet, paper, 5½" x 8½", (12) pp.

RANDALL, RUTH PAINTER **1959-66**

I Mary/A Biography/of the girl who married/Abraham Lincoln/by/Ruth Painter Randall/Little, Brown & Company/Boston Toronto.

Book, cloth, 5¾" x 8¼", 242 pp., fr., illus., price $3.50.

SEYLAR, MARGARET MELCHIOR **1959-67**

Mary/Elizabeth/and/Mr. Lincoln/by Margaret Melchior Seylar/Interesting Reading Series/Morton Botel/Coordinating Editor/Penns Valley Publishers, Inc.

Pamphlet, flexible boards, 5½" x 8½", 34 pp., illus. Penns Valley Publishers, Inc., 102 South Allen Street, State College, Penn.

UNITED STATES LINCOLN SESQUICENTENNIAL COMMISSION **1959-68**

(Seal)/The Lincoln Sesquicentennial/Intelligencer/a newsletter highlighting events in the observance/of the 150th anniversary of Lincoln's birth/June, 1959/Washington, D. C./Vol. 1—No. 3/(Caption title).

Folder, paper, 8½" x 11", (8) pp.

LINCOLN NATIONAL LIFE FOUNDATION **1959-69**

Lincoln Lore/Bulletin of the Lincoln National Life Foundation/Dr. R. Gerald McMurtry, Editor/Published each month by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne/Indiana/Number 1452 February, 1959—Number 1460 October, 1959/(Caption title).

Folder, paper, 8½" x 11", 4 pp., illus. Number 1452, Lincoln's Second Inaugural Part I The Reception . . .; 1453, Lincoln's Second Inaugural Part II The Inaugural Ball . . .; 1454, Lincoln Lore Wordage Equal to Fifteen Thick Volumes . . .; 1455, Abraham Lincoln Manuscripts in the Foundation Collection . . .; 1456, Most Significant Lincoln Cartoon—February 12, 1959 . . .; 1457, "A. Lincoln & Son" . . .; 1458, Most Timely Lincoln Editorial—February 12, 1959 . . .; 1459, "The Only Murderer, Defended by Lincoln, Who Was Hanged For His Crime" . . .; 1460, Lincoln's Youth . . .